

## Curriculum Characteristics of Madrasah Aliyah in East Kalimantan

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### Abstract

This research is aimed to investigate characteristics of curriculum used by Madrasah Aliyah in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. Specifically, document analysis and interview were used to capture the characteristics of curriculum particularly in terms of its structure and development procedures. This research was done in four different Madrasah Aliyah in Samarinda i.e. Madrasah Aliyah (MAN) 2, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin, and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) An-Nur. The findings in this research indicate that all Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study have conducted suitable curriculum implementation which is in accordance with Indonesian Educational National Standards that include four aspects i.e. 1) subject course which is divided into compulsory and elective courses; b) local course which include local course programs and values; c) soft skills which contain enforcement of students' interest such as in the area of language study, arts, sports, and theology; and d) life skills which comprise scouting program and special skills. In addition, the structure of curriculum of all Madrasah Aliyah in this study already contained the main objective of a proper curriculum including course subject, local course, soft skills, life skills, decent spiritual and social behaviors, and special skills. Finally, the future implication is provided in discussion part of the research.

**Keywords:** Curriculum characteristics, curriculum development, curriculum structure

### A. Introduction

institutions that have been developed according to the needs and changes that occur in society. It is indicated by two major points i.e. the development of science and needs of society. Particularly, the development of Madrasah always adjusts to the development of science where nowadays, Madrasah is very dominant in terms of *Al-Ilm Al-Naqliyah* or knowledge related to Al Qur'an

such as *Tafsir* or commentary, *Qiraat*, *Hadith*, *Ushul Fiqh*, etc. In subsequent development, especially during the period of *Khilafah Abbasiyah*, Madrasah has taught *Ilm Al-'Aqliyah* such as Philosophy, Mathematics, Medicine, etc. Moreover, the main needs of Muslim society are merely concerning with Islamic *Dakwah*, thus the target of Madrasah tend to focus on education for adults. When there are increasing adherents of Islam, the goals of Madrasah are adjusted accordingly to the needs of larger society (Suwito, 2005).

In Indonesia, Madrasah is not a new term of formal institution in education. In this case, Madrasah has become a very popular institution among Indonesian society. It is certainly not surprising because the fact is that there are quite many of number of both private and public Madrasah spread out the Indonesian Archipelago from Sabang to Merauke. Many of Indonesian society believe that Madrasah is the right choice for their children to seek for religious as well as global knowledge. This strong believe of parents grow from the reality that graduates from Madrasah can surely compete with those who graduate from public schools. Despite the fact that students from Madrasah can contend to students from public schools, ongoing process of education in Madrasah also meet challenges in this globalization era i.e. the rapid development of technology especially in terms of information and communication technology, the existence of a dominant culture from a developed country that challenge Islamic cultures and values, the integration of the world's communities, and the changing of social expectation toward educational institution including Madrasah (Supriatna & Ratnaningsih, 2017).

In any educational institution including Madrasah, the presence of proper curriculum used is highly urgent since it is utilized to formulate educational important elements in everyday activities at schools (Adirika & Okolie, 2017). The study about curriculum is fascinating and have been researched all over the world throughout the history. In addition, the research about curriculum development as well as its structure become popular to every level of education starting from pre-school up to university levels and any educational institution such as in public schools (Hidayati, Zaim, Rukun, & Darmansyah, 2014; Kamil, Mukminin, & Kassim, 2013), Madrasah (Irsad, 2016; Islami, 2016; Mesiono, Aziz, & Syafaruddin, 2019; Nasir, 2013; Muhlisin & Fajar, 2019; Munziyati, 2011; Husna & Arifin, 2016), and even at university educational platforms (Rahayu et al., 2019; Rokhimawan, Istiningsih, & Sukiman, 2020).

Particularly, this research is aimed to explore the characteristics of curriculum used by four different Madrasah Aliyah in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. In this case, curriculum characteristics investigated in this research is in terms of the development of curriculum and structure of curriculum existed at Madrasah Aliyah (MAN) 2, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Mujadihin, and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) An-Nur. Other than that, the curriculum characteristics and curriculum development are measured by relying on the Indonesian Educational National Standards.

## B. Literature Review

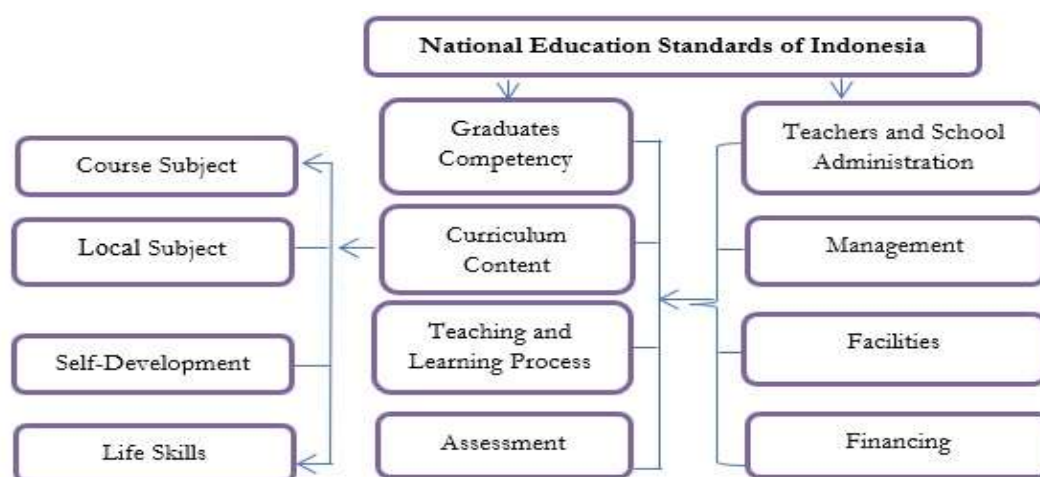
The Curriculum is a set of plans, experiences and intended outcomes of a teaching and learning process in classrooms which is formulated through systemic reconstruction (Adirika & Okolie, 2017). In line with Adirika & Okolie (2017), Tylor (1949) as one of curriculum experts mentioned that curriculum as a whole of planned student learning and directed by schools in order to achieve the set educational goals. In addition, it is very important to have a proper curriculum applied in certain educational institution because what students learn in the classrooms including concepts, ideas, and skills, they will take it and practice as they are out of

the classrooms. Thus, three aspects are proposed by Sloan (2009) including policy makers, cultural norms and organizational structure at schools, and real-world political utility.

Furthermore, in terms of curriculum development, there are several well-known curriculum models proposed by former experts in the field of curriculum i.e. Ralph Tyler's model (Tyler, 1949; 1986), Giles's model (Giles, McCutchen, & Zechiel, 1949), Walker's model (Walker & Soltis, Jonas, 2004), and Hilda Taba's model (Taba, 1962). Specifically, the model of curriculum proposed by Ralph Tyler is more classic rather than other models where in the arrangement of the curriculum, the instructional designers should pay attention to the very basic elements such as educational aims, the content needed to achieve the educational goals, valuable activities in order to have students experience prestigious learning programs, and the most effective method in order to determine whether the learning outcomes have been achieved or not. The next curriculum model proposed by Taba (1962) is popular with interactive model of curriculum. It mainly stressed on instructional strategies planning and deliberate it as the fundamental basis of curriculum design. Different with the previous models, Walker's model presented naturalistic model or what so called by descriptive model or process model of curriculum. In this case, Walker's model of curriculum organized three important aspects including policy which can give benefits to educational system, decision making between stakeholders, and having organization and structure of curriculum as the most fundamental aspects in designing the curriculum. Lastly, Giles's model of curriculum offered four-step model to curriculum development i.e. the determination of aims, goals, and objectives, assortment of learning experiences and content, experiences organization, and assessment toward learning outcomes.

In Indonesia, the reformation of curriculum is changing throughout history, starting from Madrasah curriculum in the Old Order era (1945-1966), Madrasah curriculum in the New Order era (1966-1998), and Madrasah curriculum in the Reform era (1998-now) (Raihani, 2018). Specifically, in the Reform era, curriculum used in Madrasah and schools almost have no difference since this era is considered to uphold indiscrimination. Additionally, in Indonesian context, the National Education System number 20 stated that curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content and learning materials as well as the methods used as guidelines for organizing learning activities to achieve certain goals (Permendikbud Nomor 20, 2003). Another concept of curriculum came from Print (1993) pointed out that curriculum is planned learning experience, offered within programs on educational institutions, represented as a document and include experience resulting from a set of programmed document implementation.

In Indonesia, the setting of educational goals is known as graduate competency standards, content and learning materials which is known as content standard, methods arrangement or well-known as the learning process standard, and assessment system known as assessment standard (Permendikbud Nomor 32, 2013; Permendikbud Nomor 20, 21, 22, 2016). Furthermore, the content of curriculum in Indonesia is clearly stated on the National Education Standard as pointed out on below diagram:



Above diagram indicates that Madrasah as part of educational institutions in Indonesia, in its management must be able to meet the standards set while maintaining the characteristics of Madrasah as an Islamic educational institution which objective is to produce young intellectual Muslims who can integrate between knowledge and technology which is in accordance with Islamic believes and teachings.

In developing school and Madrasah curriculum, Indonesia is currently using Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) with a 2013 competency curriculum where it is developed and implemented by every public school and Madrasah education unit which rely on the Indonesian National Education Standards. In addition, based on Indonesian National Education Standards, public schools and Madrasah must develop their curriculum through analysis of statutory provisions concerning the curriculum, analysis of student needs, formation of Madrasah curriculum development team, curriculum workshops that involving various related parties, curriculum expert review and enactment (Permendikbud Nomor 36, 2018).

Moreover, curriculum development procedures are the diagnosis of needs, special formulations, content selection, content organization, selection and organization of learning experiences and evaluation checking of sequences and balances (Hamalik, 2002; 2008). In addition, three stages of curriculum development procedures suggested to be followed i.e. organization, development, and application (Print, 1993; Idi, 2010) are very crucial considering that in curriculum 2013, teachers must involve students during the learning process. Other than that, not only students are in needs to be more active in the classroom, but teachers are the very important element in teaching and learning process e.g. the teachers should be technologically literate by the use of media provided by educational institution (Lestari & Sutrisno, 2018).

### C. Research Methodology

This This is a qualitative research which carried out case study (Cresswell, 2005; Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016; Patton, 2002) as the research design which is aimed to capture all of natural phenomenon occurred (Syaodih, 2008a) typically concerning with characteristics of curriculum used in four different Madrasah Aliyah (MA) in East Kalimantan, particularly in Samarinda i.e. MAN 2, MA Darul Ihsan, MA Al-Mujahidin, and MA An-Nur. Data obtained from document analysis as well as interview were employed to obtain the patterns of procedure of curriculum development and curriculum structure implemented at above Madrasah Aliyah.

Analysis of the research results were gained through three steps i.e. data organizing, data summarizing, data interpreting, and data concluding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Cresswell, 2003).

## D. Findings

### 1. Procedures of Curriculum Development at Madrasah Aliyah in East Kalimantan

Validity In terms of mechanism and procedures of curriculum development in Samarinda, East Kalimantan, the researcher found that all of Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study i.e. Madrasah Aliyah (MAN) 2, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan, Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin, and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) An-Nur have developed the curriculum used in accordance with Indonesian National Education Standards. General description is reflected on the following table:

No	Compliance of Curriculum Development Procedures	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Annur	Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan
1	Team of Madrasah curriculum development	√	√	√	√
2	Workshop Madrasah curriculum development	-	√	-	√
3	Consultant of Madrasah curriculum development	-	-	-	-
4	Analysis of statutory provisions	√	√	√	√
5	Analysis of the needs of students and Madrasah environment	√	√	√	√
6	Analysis of Madrasah resources availability	√	√	√	√
7	Development of goals	√	√	√	√
8	Development of content and learning materials	√	√	√	√
9	Development of learning process	√	√	√	√
10	Development of learning assessment	√	√	√	√
11	Curriculum reviewer	-	-	-	-
12	Ratification and enactment of Madrasah curriculum	√	√	√	√

## 1. Structure of Curriculum at Madrasah Aliyah in East Kalimantan

### a. Structure of Curriculum Based on Elective Courses

No	Compliance of Curriculum Development Procedures	Math and Science Elective Courses	Social Science Elective Course	Language and Cultures Elective Course	Theology Elective Course
1	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Annur	-	√	-	-
2	Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2	√	√	√	√
3	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin	√	√	-	-
4	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan	√	√	-	-

### b. Structure of Curriculum Based on Local Courses

No	Type of Local Courses	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Annur	Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan
1	Vernacular Languages	-	-	-	-
2	Environmental Education	√	√	√	√
3	Local Arts	√	√	√	√
4	Local Sports	√	√	√	√
5	Local Religious Traditions	√	√	√	√

### c. Structure of Curriculum Based on Soft Skills

No	Type of Soft Skills	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Annur	Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) 2	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Al-Mujahidin	Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Darul Ihsan
1	English	√	√	√	√
2	Islamic Arts (Habsyi)	√	√	√	√
3	Islamic Community (Rohis)	√	√	√	√
4	Youth Scientific Papers	√	√	√	√
5	National Flag Hoisting Troops	√	√	√	√
6	<i>Palang Merah Remaja (PMR)</i>	√	√	√	√
7	<i>Nasyid</i>	√	√	√	√
8	<i>Kitab Kuning</i>	√	√	√	√
9	<i>Da'i Daiyah</i>	√	√	√	√

Not only the above most popular soft skills, other life skills also provided by all Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study i.e. Islamic life skills such as *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an*, *Khutbah Jum'at*, *Cerdas Cermat Al Qur'an*, *Tahfidzul Qur'an*, Calligraphy, as well as general life skills such as speech, poetry, scout, and computer literacy. Moreover, several kinds of Islamic activities are provided by all of the Madrasah Aliyah in this study i.e. Fasting month activities such as *Pesantren Kilat*, *Tarawih* praying, *Halal Bihalal*, *Tadarus* or reciting Al Qur'an, *Zakat Fitrah*, and *Shodaqoh*. Another Islamic program which continuously held as yearly program is commemoration of Islamic public holidays such as *Maulid Nabi*, *Isra Mi'raj*, *Islamic New Year*, *Idul Fitri*, and *Idul Adha*. In addition, all of Madrasah Aliyah in this study also facilitate their students to have outbound activities as one of extracurricular program for the students. It is aimed to have the students still in learning activities but covering with fun and refreshing situation. In commemorating the events, not only inviting competent speakers, students also contribute in performing any kinds of arts such as becoming a master of ceremony, speech performance, Al Qur'an recitation, and other Islamic arts such as *Nasyid* community. Those activities are intended to build students' positive characteristics such as noble attitude toward family and society.

## **E. Discussions**

Based on above data findings, it is showed that all Madrasah Aliyah in this study have procedurally developed a curriculum with reference to the Indonesian Educational National Standards. Furthermore, regarding with curriculum structure, there are four elective courses that Madrasah should provide based on the national standards i.e. Mathematic and Science, Social and Cultures, Language and Cultures, and Theology elective courses, even though not all of Madrasah Aliyah provide all elective courses completely for their students because it based on the compliance of the Madrasah to provide for the elements of teachers, administration staff, facilities, and financing. Those kinds of elective courses is also aimed to provide students with an opportunity to plan their major when they continue their study to the next level at university level (Rizki, Wasono, & Nasution, 2019).

The four elective courses show that the curriculum structure at all Madrasah Aliyah in this study tend to be conducted in classical education and subject academic curriculum models. This concept assumes that the function of education is to maintain and transmit knowledge, theory, and culture which are already established and well organized from educators to students. Successful students are those who can master various disciplines to be transmitted to the next generation (Diane et al., 1975; Idi, 2010; Hadiyanto, 2009; Limbong, Syafaruddin, & Fachruddin, 2017). Additionally, Syaodih (2008) added that the concept of classical education and subject academic curriculum models is intended to give solid knowledge to train students to use ideas as well as research process by applying the methods of expository and inquiry. It is aimed to have the students a problem-solution behavior pattern by applying correlated curriculum, unified or concentrated curriculum, integrated curriculum and problem-solving curriculum. Various evaluation can be used based on objective of courses being taught. For example, in humanities course, the method used to assess is an essay test rather than objective test because this type of course needs detail answer which reflects logics and comprehensive reasons.

Concerning with local course, all of Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study have already develop local course properly in accordance with the objectives and basic concepts of the local course curriculum i.e. introduce and disseminate students with natural, social and cultural

environment, equip students with ability and skills as well as knowledge in the area which is useful for them individually and for public society, students are able to manage attitude and behavior with noble values of local culture in order to support national development, and students are aware of the environmental problems in society and find for prestigious solution (Wasliman, 2007; Muhaimin, Sutiah, & Prabowo, 2008).

Moreover, local course is important to be maintained since its content include values, traditions, cultures, and skills that students can implement in society in the future. By adding local course in curriculum used by any formal institution including Madrasah, the government expects that students not only learn what so called by global knowledge, but also include the values of socio-cultural of local surrounding environment (Nasir, 2013). In addition to strengthening the local course curriculum, all of Madrasah Aliyah in this study also developed a curriculum which supports student self-development in the form of strengthening students' talents and interest in linguistics, arts, sports, youth scientific paper, theology, etc. In this case, self-development in Madrasah is developed on the basis of romanticism philosophy and humanistic curriculum concept models. The flow and model of this curriculum assume that every child is born with different potential and intelligence. Specifically, humanistic and personal relevance concepts support the view that school curriculum prepares a variety of valuable experiences to enhance students' personal development. Therefore, the teachers' job is to create an environment which supports the improvement of students' self-learning (Diane et al., 1975).

Another important aspect which is curriculum structure with soft skills based has already covered and meet sufficient and adequate elements which include various types of activities or programs that the students can contribute starting from common activities provided by public schools such as scouting, sports, speech, foreign language competencies, as well as Islamic programs and communities such as *Nasyid*, *Khutbah Jum'at*, *Habsyi*, *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an*, etc. It indicates that all of Madrasah Aliyah in this research tend to focus on students' character building by providing them proper activities out of classroom learning as extracurricular activities. As what is researched by Hidayati et al. (2014) and Islami (2016) which showed that character education included in a curriculum is very important where it should be the basis of curriculum objective starting from elementary level. Not only to improve students' achievement, but the objective of curriculum should notice the students; attitude on the learning outcomes (Muhlisin & Fajar, 2019).

The findings of this study imply that even though all of the Madrasah Aliyah in this study meet the criteria set by Indonesian Educational National Standards, yet those Madrasah still need to improve the quality of the curriculum used in terms of involving professional parties such as consultant for curriculum quality as well as committees of Madrasah, students' parents, community and religious leaders, and other parties by accommodating focus group discussions or workshops. It is very important so that the Madrasah curriculum documents which has been developed can be the basis and reference of entire Madrasah in organizing education in order to achieve the specified goals

## F. Conclusion

Based on research findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that all of Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study have proper curriculum characteristics especially in terms of curriculum development procedures and curriculum structures which is in line with the Indonesian Educational National Standards. Particularly, the curriculum structure applied at all



Madrasah Aliyah researched in this study include four elements i.e. subject including compulsory and elective courses, local course, soft skills, and life skills which include scout and special skills. Among those four elements, the element of soft skills is the one which provide various programs for students to participate as extracurricular activities such as theology, Islamic arts, sport, and foreign language competencies. Nevertheless, all Madrasah in this study still in need of increasing involving various parties which can support the successfulness of curriculum applied at the Madrasah such as parents, supervisors, consultant, and religious leaders through any kind of possible focus group discussion and forum.

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